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does good service to the Crusaders, and eventually rescues his brother's daughter, Giselda, from the harem of a certain Oronte, son of the Governor of Antioch. Giselda, however, having fallen in love with Oronte, thinks rather of converting her *innamorato* to the true faith than of leaving him. Her wish is accomplished somewhat later. Antioch being besieged and taken by Arvino, Oronte and Giselda escape together. Oronte, in the flight, is pursued and mortally wounded; but conducted by Pagano to his hermit's abode, he dies there, a Christian—thanks to the united persuasions of his lover and the repentant parricide. Giselda is consoled by a vision which shows that, owing to her successful advocacy, Oronte has been admitted into Paradise. Pagano receives his death-wound in the act of saving the life of his injured brother, at the siege of Jerusalem.

When we repeat that *I Larmido* contains an air for the tenor (Oronte), "La mia letizia," one or two spirited though by no means well-written choruses, short, abrupt, noisy, and generally in unison, a somewhat tortured prayer for Giselda, with occasional passages of less importance, we have said all that can justly be said in favor of the music in what is decidedly one of Verdi's worst operas and one of the worst operas ever composed. The performance, however, at Her Majesty's Theatre—now that Signor Mongini has taken the place of Mr. Hobler, in the part of Oronte, for the adequate representation of which the English tenor was scarcely competent—is generally so good, that stupid as is the libretto, and empty as is the music for the most part, the thing is worth at least a hearing. Perhaps no more ungratefully laborious a part exists in the lyric drama than that of Giselda; but those who take pleasure in seeing how difficulties may be overcome by art and resolution combined, can hardly do better than go and listen to Mdlle. Tietjens. The effect she makes out of her music is nothing short of wonderful. Not less remarkable is the indomitable perseverance and eminent ability with which Mr. Santley grapples with the music of that most detestable personage—repentant sinner though he be—Pagano. There is hardly a phrase in the whole that is really and in the genuine sense musical. But as Dædalus essayed the empty air with wings, and

Perrupit Acheronta Hercules labor, so do these true artists, struggling with the difficulties of *I Lombardi*, exemplify the Horatian rule that *nil mortalibus arduum est*. As much, indeed, may be said for Signor Mongini, who, nevertheless, at any rate, has one melody to sing ("La mia letizia"). The other characters are extremely well supported. What can possibly be made out of Arvino is well made out by Signor Tasca, a tenor with a voice worth cultivating more assiduously; and the subordinate part of Pirro, Pagano's confidant, is admirably sustained by that very generally useful and efficient singer, Signor Gassier. Signor Tasca interpolates an exceedingly dull *scena* from "Giovanna d'Arco"—another opera by Verdi (his seventh\*), written to a libretto for which the already-named Solera found materials in a pastoral poem by Domrémy, and produced, without success, at the Scala (Milan), in 1845; but, for the impression it creates, this *scena* might as well be omitted. The character of Violinda could hardly meet with a more docile representative than Mdlle. Corsi. "I Lombardi" is effectively placed upon the stage; the costumes are for the most part appropriate, and the scenery of Mr. Telbin is picturesque. Nor is anything left undone that can possibly be done for the musical *ensemble* by Signor Ardit. Notwithstanding all this, it is useless to hope that so feeble a work can much longer hold its position.

The return of Signor Mongini has greatly satisfied the frequenters of Her Majesty's Theatre. His second appearance was in the "Trovatore," about which inevitable revival, season after season, it is unnecessary to offer one word beyond

the mere statement that never has the music of Manrico been declaimed with more splendid vigor than by the gentleman whose voice now stands pre-eminent among "robust tenors." Of course the Leonora was Mdlle. Tietjens, and the Conte di Luna Mr. Santley. There was also a new Azucena—Mdlle. Eracleo—who is not likely to be heard again. We have had, too, one performance of the "Huguenots," with Mdlle. Tietjens as Valentine, Signor Tasca as Raoul, Herr Rokitski as Marcel, perhaps the best—if a splendid *basso profundo*, one of the deepest and richest in quality since the prime of Herr Formes, and a fair dramatic talent may count—now to be obtained; Mdlle. Sinico, to whom every possible character in the operatic repertory seems to come readily, as the Queen; Signor Gassier as St. Bris; Mr. Santley as Nevers; and another unknown lady, Mdlle. Martelli—*prima donna contratto assoluta* at the San Carlo Theatre, Lisbon, but not at all likely ever to support the same dignity at Her Majesty's Theatre, London—as Urbain, the page. "Der Freischütz" has equally been played once, with Mdlle. Tietjens as Agatha, Mdlle. Sinico as Annchen, Signor Gassier (why not Mr. Santley?) as Caspar, and Signor Tasca (Signor Mongini being indisposed) as Max. This was by no means such a performance of Weber's masterpiece as we have been accustomed to at Her Majesty's Theatre. About the very recent revival of Otto Nicolai's "Falstaff" (on Thursday night) we shall speak in a future article. There are several changes in the cast of the *dramatis personæ*, each of which merits consideration apart.

Meanwhile, at Her Majesty's Theatre the re-appearance of Mdlle. Ilma de Murska, and the advent of the new singer, Mdlle. Christine Nilsson (from the Théâtre Lyrique), are anxiously looked forward to; while at the Royal Italian Opera the novelties anticipated with most interest are the new operas of Verdi and Gounod—"Don Carlos" and "Romeo et Juliette" (with Mdlle. Patti as Juliet, and Signor Mario as Romeo).

#### ART PRIZES AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

In an interesting letter from Paris, written, we understand, by Parke Godwin, and printed in the *Post*, we find some very pertinent criticisms upon the management of the affair. The prizes offered consisted of eight grand medals—fifteen first class, twenty second class, and twenty-four third class medals.

The medals of honor were awarded to Meissonnier, Gérôme, Theodore Rousseau, and Cabanel, French; to Leys, Belgian; Knaus, Prussian; Kaulbach, Bavarian; and Ussi, Italian.

The fifteen *premieres prix*, or first prizes, were given to Pils, Fromentin, Bida, Francois, R. Fleury, Daubigny, Jules Bréton, Millet, French; Horschelt and Piloty, Bavarian; A. Stevens and Wilhems, Belgian; Matejko, Austrian; Rosales, Spanish; Calderon, English.

The twenty *deuxiemes prix*, or second prizes, were given to Sigismund L'Allemand, (*jeune*), Austrian; Bonnat, Brion, Rosa Bonheur, Corot, Delaunay, Dupré, Hamon, Hebert, Jalabert, Yvon, all French; to F. E. Church, American; Claes, Belgian; Gude, Norwegian; Morelli, Italian; Menzel, Prussian; Nicol, English; Palmarioli, Spaniard; Jadema, Hollander; Vautier, Swiss.

The twenty-four *troisiemes prix*, or third prizes, were given to Achenbach, Prussian; F. Adam, Bavarian; Bergh, Swede; H. Baron, Bouguereau, Belly, Buss, n., Cabat, Vetter, Couzon, Levy, Chavannes, Comte, all French; and to Fagerlin, Swede; Faruffini, Italy; Gisbert and Gonsalvo, Spain; Braels, Pays Bas; KotzeJue, Russia; Leubach, Bavaria; Orchardson, England; Pagli-

ano, Italy; Wurzinger, Austria; Walker, England.

Of the sixty-seven medals the French take thirty-two; the Prussians three; the Austrians three; the Pays Bas two; the Belgians four; the Bavarians five; the Spaniards four; the Italians four; the Englishmen four; the Russians one; the Swedes two; the Swiss one; the Americans one; the Norwegians one.

The jury on sculpture is reported to have made a *mention honorable* of Ward for his statue of the "Indian Hunter," but the Imperial Commission has refused to permit any *mention honorable*, just as they refused the request of the jury on painting to divide the same amount of money among more medals. Of the twenty-six judges, twelve were Frenchmen, and no less than eight were artists, who were also competitors for the prizes. Is it surprising that thirty-two out of sixty-seven medals were given to Frenchmen; that eight of these—four grand medals and four first medals—were voted to the very artists who composed part of the jury? In our country the law prohibits a man from being a judge in his own case, interpreting the instinctive sense of all persons of delicate and honorable feeling; but Messieurs, Meissonnier, Gérôme, Rousseau, Cabanel, Fromentin, Bida, Francois and Pils do not seem to be actuated by any such scruples. They boldly declare that they are themselves the best painters in the world; vote themselves half of the grand medals, and distribute half of the others to their colleagues. In my opinion, not one of the French artists who received medals of honor is fit to be ranked in the highest class. They have all very great technical skill, I admit; they are all masters of manipulation; and some of them have an exquisite feeling for color; but not one of them has exhibited a first-class picture—that is a picture combining the essential qualities of a great work. These qualities are: 1. Subject; 2. Composition; 3. Drawing; 4. Color; and, 5. Technical skill; and a picture, in order to be a really great picture, must unite them all, more or less, in a grand and harmonious whole. Now, Meissonnier is a mere *genre* painter, noted for the extreme delicacy and minuteness of his touch, but whose works never move any sentiment but that of surprise, and, perhaps, admiration of his dexterity. His merit is of the same kind that we admire in the lace worker who knits a thousand threads in the space of an inch, or of the gold-worker who constructs an entire watch of about the size of a pea. I find no grand idea in what he does, no grand sentiment, no composition, no broad conceptions of life and nature, no dramatic dignity, nothing but an excessively minute handling of form and color to portray an excessively insignificant subject. Gérôme has attempted higher things than Meissonnier; his "Death of Cæsar," his "Gladiators," his "Duel after the Ball," his "Muezzin," his "Prayer in the Desert," and his "Prisoner," have strong touches of sentiment; but, for the most part, his subjects are unpleasant and repulsive; and his chief merits, like that of Meissonnier, are technical. His drawing is, to the last degree, faithful, and his handling wonderfully delicate, clear, and vigorous. But who wants to see such graces of art applied to a Phrynée before the tribunal; to the "Alma;" to a Turkish butcher, with his liver and lights hanging on the wall; to a mosque of Et-Assaneyn, with a heap of immolated heads blocking the door-step, or to Roman augurs, swollen with wine and leering like gross, vulgar

\* "Ernani" was his fifth, and "I due Foscari" his sixth.

caricatures of humanity. Cabanel paints flesh with a rare purity and vigor of life; but one of his subjects, the "Adam and Eve," is impious and disgusting; the "Faun carrying off a Nymph" ought to be turned to the wall; another, "The Birth of Venus," would be better with a veil over it; and the rest are portraits, of which one purports to be the emperor, whose face seems to be cut out of a Dutch cheese, with the most rascally, treacherous eyes that were ever set in a human head. Theodore Rousseau, is a landscapist, clever and conscientious no doubt, but blotchy and heavy, and whose nature oppresses me with its masses of thick paint and absence of clear, dewy atmosphere. He is none the less vastly admired by those who see nature as he does, and who prefer technical skill and striking effect—the incontestable merits of the French school—to the other nicer and higher qualities of genuine art.

(From Ella's Musical Record.)

#### MUSICAL ANECDOTES.

A cruel instance of a *double encore* I once witnessed, which gave pain to a favorite prima donna, and reflected on the vulgar taste of an insensate, inconsiderate public. The opening duet of the second act of "La Gazza Ladra" expresses the agony of the imprisoned maiden, and sympathy of her fellow-servant—soprano and contralto. Grisi delivered the melody with true expression, as did Alboni in the dominant—a fourth below the tonic. The *timbre* of Alboni's voice, in this pathetic melody, told wonderfully on the audience. When called upon to sing her part a *third* time, the sensitive nature of the insulted soprano was painfully hurt, and for a while Grisi left the stage. The selfishness and thoughtless distinctions of a mixed public, in their excessive transports of delight from mere sensual effects, are a constant source of annoyance to an intellectual artist. In this particular duet of "Ninetta" and "Pippo," however, I recollect Mlle. Brambilla being encored when Grisi was yet young and handsome, and her voice in its best condition. La prima donna then had absolute power, and at her bidding the duet was afterwards omitted. In the other instance, with Alboni, the opera itself was not repeated.

It is related of the famous Dragonetti, that, after performing a most fatiguing solo on the double-bass, he obstinately refused to obey the call for an encore. The public in vain insisted upon the solo being repeated. After considerable delay, the Venetian patriarch of the contra-basso explained to the manager, in his own peculiar cosmopolitan language: "Das I play ancora, mais si paga ancora? per Bacco!" (*Anglice*—"Well, I play encore, but you pay encore?") and ten guineas was the penalty which this encore cost the manager. If popular singers, annoyed with the public appetite for encores, were to pursue the same system, managers would soon adopt means to suppress the nuisance, or else singers would become millionaires.

As frequently occurs, even at the Musical Union, Ernst turned over two leaves by mistake. Mendelssohn, perceiving the delay of the *entree* of the violin, to the astonishment and delight of all present, improvised a phrase which most effectively filled up the void. A burst of applause followed, and our late royal president, the Duke of Cambridge, exclaimed—"Wonderful!" Mendelssohn, with that joyous spirit which I can never forget, heartily enjoyed the occurrence. A bank director, also present, humorously accused Mendelssohn of "putting more notes into circulation than authorized by printed authority." The composer laughed; and Thalberg, among the company present, had his complimentary joke upon improvisations and "volti, non subito."

I have seldom witnessed a more striking, and

even affecting scene, than the annual award of prizes to the students of music, painting, sculpture, and architecture, at the Institute of France. To obtain the traveling pension and free residence in Rome is the natural ambition of every aspiring student of the Paris Conservatoire of Music. A gold medal of the value of £20 is given to the successful author of the Cantata. In the Institute a room is assigned to each competitor, and within a stated time his composition must be finished without the aid of an instrument. The musical Section, Members of the Institute, examine the score of each candidate, and the composition for which the prize is awarded is performed in presence of a full assembly of *savans* and visitors, occupying every part of the spacious amphitheatre. After an appropriate and encouraging address, the fortunate youth receives from the President a wreath of laurel, amidst the cheers of the assembly and his fellow-students in the gallery. The student, overwhelmed with joy, in one bound rushes up the steps of the tribune, and with emotion embraces his learned instructor, who, in his turn, says a few kind words to his cherished pupil. I own to have felt much humiliated in witnessing this touching scene in Paris, knowing how much is needed in my own country to encourage and foster the musical art, and to educate the gifted and deserving poor student.

#### REFLECTIONS, CRITICAL AND SUGGESTIVE.

BY ROBERT SCHUMANN.

*Continued from page 85.*

LISZT IN LEIPZIG.—The first concert, on the 17th March, was a remarkable sight. The audience were crowded together pell-mell. The very room did not look like itself, and the orchestra was filled with seats for the public. In the middle sat Liszt. He commenced with the Scherzo and Finale of Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony"—a strange choice, and on several accounts, not a happy one. In one's own private room, with a friend or two, it is possible to forget the orchestra in the transcription, which is certainly most carefully done; but in public, in the very hall in which one had heard the symphony over and over again, played by the band in the most finished style, the comparative weakness of the piano was severely felt, and the more severely the more strenuously it endeavored to render the masses of orchestral sound. A simpler and more suggestive arrangement would, probably, have been more effective. But it served the purpose of exhibiting the master on his own instrument, and all were content; they had, at least, seen the lion shake his mane. The noble animal was soon to do mightier things. His next piece was a Fantasia on themes by Pacini, played in truly extraordinary fashion. But I would willingly have exchanged all the astonishing and audacious execution displayed in this for the magical delicacy with which he interpreted the Study that followed it. With the single exception of Chopin, I repeat that I know no one to approach him in this style. He finished with his well-known "Chromatic Galop," and then, as the applause still continued, played the equally well-known "Bravura Waltz."

Liszt was too exhausted and unwell to give the concert announced for the next day. But, in the meantime, a musical festival was in preparation, of such a nature that neither he himself, nor any one else present, should ever forget it. The giver of the festival—Mendelssohn—had avowedly chosen the programme from compositions unknown to his guest, viz., Schubert's Symphony in C; his

own Psalm, "As pants the Hart;" the Meers-tille Overture; three Choruses from "St. Paul;" and, for the wind-up, Bach's Concerto for three pianos, to be played by Liszt, Hiller, and himself. The whole thing had a completely impromptu air, and it occupied three thoroughly delightful hours, such as one can hardly hope to enjoy again for years. At the end Liszt played a solo, and wonderfully too. The party separated in a state of delight and excitement, and the cheerful and bright expression which lit up every face shone, as it were, like a thank-offering to the giver of the festival for his homage to the talent and fame of his brother-artist.

Liszt's most genial performance, however, was yet to come. This was Weber's "Concertstück," with which he opened his second concert. On this evening the whole audience, both professional and non-professional, were in the most cordial humor, and the enthusiasm which prevailed during the piece, and at its conclusion, surpassed well-nigh everything before witnessed. He started the concerto at once with a force and majesty of expression befitting a procession to the battlefield, and carried it on with increasing power, bar by bar, until he seemed to dominate over the whole orchestra, and to lead it on in triumph. At this moment he really looked like the great commander to whom we have already compared him, and the shouts of applause might well have been mistaken for "Vive l'Empereur!" Besides the "Concertstück," he gave a Fantasia on themes from the "Hugenots," Schubert's "Ave Maria and Serenade," and finally, at the demand of the audience, the "Erl King." But the "Concertstück" was the glory of the whole performance.

Who it was that suggested the crown of flowers which was handed to him at the close by a favorite lady singer, I know not, but it was certainly well deserved. None but a narrow and spiteful nature could carp, as some have carped, at a friendly act of homage like this. To give you, my friends, the pleasure which you this day enjoyed, this great artist had sacrificed years of his life: of the labor his art had cost him you know nothing: he gave you the best he had, his heart's blood, his very utmost, and you grudge him, in return, a paltry garland!

Liszt, however, would not remain in debt. He was evidently much pleased with his warm reception on the second occasion, and immediately stated his readiness to give a third concert for any charitable institution that might be selected. Accordingly, on Monday last, he played for the benefit of the Society for the Relief of decayed Musicians, as, on the day before, he had done at Dresden for the poor. The room was crowded to suffocation. The object of the concert, the programme, the co-operation of the most favorite artists, and, above all, the presence of Liszt himself, combined to excite the public sympathy. He arrived from Dresden in the morning, and although fatigued with his journey and with the long performance of the day before, went immediately to rehearsal, so that he had only a short interval before the commencement of the concert. Repose he had none. It is absolutely necessary to mention this, for the greatest man is, after all, but human, and the evident exhaustion with which Liszt played in the evening was but the natural consequence of his recent labors. He showed his friendly feeling by choosing for the concert compositions by three persons present, Mendelssohn, Hiller, and myself. He